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May 6th, 1856.

Vice-President BRIDGES in the Chair.

Mr. Durand presented for publication in the Journal a paper, entitled, "*Plantæ Kaneanæ Arcticæ et Polaris. An Enumeration of the Plants collected by Dr. E. K. Kane, U. S. N., in his first and second voyages to the Polar Regions, with descriptions and remarks;*" which was referred to a Committee consisting of Drs. Zantzinger, Bridges, and Uhler.

Dr. Hallowell remarked that the most abundant of the urodèles in the neighborhood of Philadelphia, is the *Plethodon* (*Desmognathus*, Bd.) *niger*, which may be said to exist by thousands. It is found under stones along the borders of rivulets near the banks of the Schuylkill, and is very quick in its movements, its capture demanding close attention and much activity. It appears to be endowed with a higher degree of vitality than the other caducibranchiates with which it is associated. Its transformation is sooner effected; specimens one inch and a half in length, being without gills, while the larvæ of *Pseudotriton ruber* are found more than three inches in length.

The *Salamandra quadrimaculata* of Prof. Holbrook is identical with this animal; the red spots are observed in quite young specimens as well as those more mature, but disappear with age. It is very abundant, a large proportion of the specimens being thus spotted.

The urodèles most frequently met with in the neighborhood of Philadelphia after the *niger* are *Pseudotriton ruber* and *Plethodon erythronotus*. The former occurs in the same localities with the *niger*, but is much less active, though perhaps more tenacious of life. The young are of a bright red color spotted with black; as age advances the color deepens, resembling spanish brown (*maculata*, Green,) and in very old specimens is of an almost purple color; the younger larvæ are white, the older olive colored with dark spots.

At the present time, April 28th, 1856, the females of both *Plethodon niger* and *Pseudotriton ruber* are distended with eggs,* as many as seventy being counted in the ovaries of the former. They are of a yellow color, about a line in diameter; none are to be seen in the oviducts; the number of eggs is not always the same in both ovaries, being sometimes considerably greater in one than the other. The eggs in many of the specimens of *Pseudotriton ruber* are immature, perfectly white and quite small. In the stomach of one of the latter a large lumbricus was found, in another the remains of a coleopterous insect, and in a third the tail and posterior extremities of a Salamander, probably a young *Plethodon niger*.

Spelerpes (*Cylindrosoma*, Tsch.) *bilineata*, is found in the same neighborhood, and also *Plethodon erythronotus*, the latter under stones, at some distance from the water, associated with *Plethodon cinereus*. In one specimen the stripe along the back was of a beautiful pink color.

May 13th.

Vice-President BRIDGES in the Chair.

Letters were read—

From Mr. F. B. Meek, dated Albany, 10th May, 1856, acknowledging his election as a Correspondent of the Academy.

From Mr. Edward Tuckerman, dated Amherst, 3d May, 1856, transmitting the collection of Plants acknowledged at the last meeting.

From E. Billings, Esq., dated Ottawa, West Canada, 6th May, 1856,

* June 26th, females of *niger* in same condition.

transmitting the first numbers of the "Canadian Naturalist and Geologist," and desiring exchange. This letter was referred to the Committee on Proceedings.

From Mr. Abraham Sager, dated Ann Harbor, Michigan, 5th May, 1856, transmitting for publication in the Proceedings, a paper, entitled, "Descriptions of Articulata, supposed to be new;" which was referred to a Committee consisting of Drs. Leidy, Hallowell, and Bridges.

Mr. Isaac Lea presented a paper for publication in the Proceedings, entitled, "Descriptions of four New Species of Exotic Uniones;" which was referred to a Committee consisting of Drs. Wilson and Bridges, and Mr. Hanson.

Mr. Charles E. Smith remarked in relation to the specimens of iron ore presented by himself this evening, that the three leading varieties of the ore, known as the Baltimore ore, were shown in the specimens. The bed lies on the west side of Chesapeake Bay, runs parallel with it, and is about fifty miles long. It is of white clay underlying the Eocene deposit. The ore lies in nodules like the brown hæmatite. In the most valuable bed, this ore is associated with large quantities of mineral charcoal, which seems to be always in broken masses. Mr. S. had never seen any traces of plants. There is no other deposit of iron ore in the neighborhood. The iron made from this ore is remarkable for its great strength. Mr. S. considered the deposit as remarkable, being the only one of which he was aware, in which the lithoid carbonate of iron exists out of the coal measures.

May 20th.

Mr. ORD, President, in the Chair.

Dr. Bridges, referring to the specimens of lithoid carbonate of iron exhibited at the last meeting, gave the following as the probable theory of the formation of this ore. Iron pyrites by exposure would be converted into a sulphate of the protoxide with some sesquioxide of iron. By contact with lime these oxides would be precipitated, the protoxide rapidly becoming sesquioxide. The contact of organic matter would reduce the sesquioxide again to protoxide, which would combine with the carbonic acid evolved during the fermentation of the organic matter.

Mr. Cassin announced the arrival in this country and the presence this evening of the Baron Von Müller, who proposes to visit Texas, Mexico, and Central America, and who is desirous of affording to the Academy any aid in his power.

Dr. Leidy remarked that he had just returned from a visit to St. Louis, and thought that the members would be gratified to learn that an "Academy of Science" had been organized in that city, whose objects were similar to our own. The Academy commences under the most promising prospects; and it occupies a highly favorable position in our country for the formation of a cabinet of natural history. It has recently received a large and very valuable collection of fossils, obtained by Dr. F. V. Hayden from the region of the Upper Missouri.